



WM. BARCLAY PARSONS, M.D.

CITATION AND PRESENTATION

OF THE

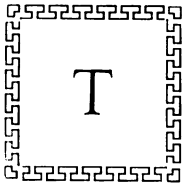
ACADEMY PLAQUE *

TO

WM. BARCLAY PARSONS, M.D.

HOWARD REID CRAIG

Director, The New York Academy of Medicine


 HERE are individuals whose innate modesty, whose simplicity and gaiety of manner belie that real effectiveness which makes them stand out amongst their fellow men. The man whom the Academy honors tonight exemplifies to an extraordinary and peculiar degree that self-effacement, that blitheness of spirit and that effectiveness in action that characterize a great man.

Born in New York City, William Barclay Parsons was educated at St. Mark's School, Harvard College and the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. From 1914 on, he was continuously associated with the Presbyterian Hospital for 39 years, rising through the grades to become Professor of Clinical Surgery at his medical Alma Mater, and Attending Surgeon at the Presbyterian Hospital. This service was interrupted by two wars. In World War I, he served first with the American Field Ambulance Service in 1916, and then as Lieutenant and Captain with the Presbyterian Mobile Unit during the Champagne, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel and Argonne offensives. In World War II, he organized and directed the 2nd General Hospital, later he was transferred as Colonel to become Chief Surgical Consultant to the Southwest Pacific area and Chief Surgical Consultant to the 6th Service Command. He was awarded the Legion of Merit—an astounding military career for a civilian surgeon.

His organizational ability called him, with Allan Whipple, Fordyce

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St. John and Hugh Auchincloss, to become one of the chief architects of the full-time system of surgical teaching and research at the Presbyterian Hospital and at the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

As a clinical surgeon, his work and his contributions to the surgery of the thyroid and the pancreas have received wide recognition. One of his confrères has described him as a brilliant clinical teacher, a fact attested to by his great personal popularity with undergraduate students and house officers.

Even as Dr. Parsons applied himself to his teaching, his research and his surgery, so he gave of himself to the activities of the Academy. Over the years, only a few Fellows have served in such a variety of functions as Barclay Parsons and have known the Academy in such detail. As secretary and then chairman of the Section on Surgery, he came to know of the work of the Sections. As a member of the Committee on Medical Information, he participated in the activities of that Standing Committee. In 1951-1952, he provided leadership as President of the Academy. Following his Presidency, Dr. Parsons served as a Trustee of the Academy for ten years. During his tenure as President and Trustee, the total assets of the Academy, fixed and invested, rose from \$20,400,000 to \$23,500,000, an evidence of the careful and earnest devotion which Dr. Parsons and his co-trustees gave to the affairs of the Academy. For four years prior to his retirement, he was chairman of the Budget Committee of the Academy Trustees. During this period, the Academy's annual operating budgets rose from \$730,000 to \$965,343. The Academy owes a great debt to Dr. Parsons and to those whom he led for their management of the fiscal affairs of the Academy.

In 1956, under the Presidency of Dr. Robert L. Levy, Dr. Parsons was appointed chairman of a committee to survey all aspects of Academy activities, internal, external and financial. Eight subcommittees with an over-all membership of 48 Fellows began their studies under Dr. Parsons. Three years later, a 36-page report was issued, containing 48 recommendations, most of which have now been implemented—another evidence of Barclay Parsons' devotion to the Academy and his ability to get things done.

But more than all this, and more important, too, has been the affection which Dr. Parsons has engendered among all those who have worked with him. Cheerful and gay, but wise and sound in his judg-

ments, he has commanded respect for his many and varied accomplishments, but most of all, for his contributions over the years to the life of The New York Academy of Medicine.

It is, therefore, with deep personal feelings that I present, on behalf of the Academy of Medicine, this plaque on which is inscribed:

PRESENTED TO

WM. BARCLAY PARSONS

IN RECOGNITION OF

OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO

THE NEW YORK

ACADEMY OF MEDICINE

